

the artist, and that a writer does not write
better for trying
to become a cherub, all head and wings. To
the Greek this
seemed obvious. Archilochus and Aeschylus,
Socrates and
Demosthenes fought in armies, Sophocles
and Thucy-
dides commanded them. Long ago FitzGerald
lamented
the contrast of such lives with the genteelly
literary
existences of the nineteenth century. When
Flaubert says
'Tachez de devenir un oeîT, had he not a litde
forgotten
the Fable of the Belly? On a later page of this
same
correspondence, after years of practising his
own theory,
he was to write: 'Hardy (his doctor) m'appelle
"une vieille
femme hystérique", mot que je trouve
profond/' So
again when he cries to Louise Colet, even in
the first
fervour of their love: 'Oh! va, aime plutot
l'Art que moi',
one feels that there was a wiser balance in
Alfieri's sum-
mary of his own experience: 'Soltanto mold
anni dopo
mi awidi, che la mia infelicità proveniva
soltanto dal
bisogno, anzi necessita, ch'era in me di
avere ad un
tempo stesso il cuore occupato da un degno
amore, e la
- mente da un qualche nobile lavoro; e ogni
qual volta
Tuna delle due cose mi manco, io rimasi
incapace dell*
altra, e sazio e infastidito, e oltre ogni dire
angustiato.'

And when Flaubert writes in the decline of
life 'Je
n'attends plus rien de la vie qu'une suite de
feuilles de
papier a barbouiller de noir', is there not a
saner as well as

finer answer in the disdainful epigram of
Chateaubriand:

*Jf ai assez ecrit si mon nom doit vivre:
beaucoup trop, s'il
doit mourir'? And when among the Alps
Flaubert cries
impatiently: ⁴Je donnerais tous les glaciers
pour le musée
du Vatican', is there not here too a rather
childish and
ill-timed one-sidedness which compares ill with
the breadth
of vision of a far smaller man, Hippolyte
Taine, when 'he
observes: *Qu'est-ce qu'un musée, sinon un
cimetière, et
qu'est-ce qu'une peinture, une statuaire, une
architecture,